Wednesday, 17 March (?)

A, J the banquet for Edmund Cossc, Vcrhaercn is seated between Maeterlinck and Henri de Rcgnior; Vcrhacren to Maeterlinck (in a whisper):

**. . . Besides, in my case . . . I can confess this to you . . . in reality, the only writing that interests me is my own."

And Maeterlinck: "That's just like me . . . moreover, even what I write doesn't interest me much any more."

Whereupon Verhaercn, giving a jump: "Oh, just a minute! That's not the same thing at all. What 1 write interests mo passionately—passionately, you understand . . . and that's the very reason why I am no longer much interested in the writings of others,"

It is Verhaercn himself who tells this, the next day, in Th6o Van Rysselberghc's studio. He adds:

"And a little later Maeterlinck told me also: What's more, I now work only out of habit/"

As soon as we have finished *Michael Kolilhaas,* we launch into *Die Marquise von* 0. . . .[1] Certainly 1 have made some progress. In Latin likewise. This morning I read with a little greater facility some of Pliny's letters and some of Catullus* verses. I want to go back to Sallust as soon as I have finished correcting the German translation of *Philoctdte?* What a bore to have to prepare that lecture: "On the theater."[3] And what I think about the theater interests me so little myself!—What I think is so unimportant to rnel

With what delight I have taken up Montaigne again! I feel wonderfully well. A good sign; I again wept copiously yesterday as I read the chapter *"Sur de$ ver$ de Virgile**** and (it's silly to admit it) the German translation of my *Philoctetc.*

Read also, and reread aloud to Em., the wonderful page written within sight of Jerusalem in *Les DestinSes de la Podsie** certainly the

[1] These are both, stories by Heinrich von Kleist

[3] *Philoctetc^ or tfie Treatise of the Three Ethics,* drama in five acts by Andr6 Gide, was published in 1899 and translated into German in 1904 by Rudolf Kassner,

[3] His lecture *The Evolution of the Tlwater,* given in Brussels, 25 March 1904, was published the same year. It contains the first mention in France of Kierkegaard.

[4] Montaigne's essay "On some Lines of Virgil" which forms Chapter V of Book III

[8] "The Destinies of Poetry/*